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ADVISORY SERVICES AND TECHNICAL COOPERATION IN THE FIELD OF HUMAN RIGHTS

Role of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights in assisting the Government and people of Cambodia in the promotion and protection of human rights

Report of the Secretary-General

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Introduction

1. The Cambodia Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights was set up in October 1993, pursuant to Commission on Human Rights resolution 1993/6, in which the Commission requested the Secretary-General to ensure a continued United Nations human rights presence in Cambodia upon the expiry of the mandate of the United Nations Transitional Authority in Cambodia (UNTAC), in order to:

(a) Manage the implementation of educational and technical assistance and advisory services programmes and to ensure their continuation;

(b) Assist the Government of Cambodia established after the election, at its request, in meeting its obligations under the human rights instruments acceded to, including the preparation of reports to the relevant monitoring committees;

(c) Provide support to bona fide human rights groups in Cambodia;

(d) Contribute to the creation and/or strengthening of national institutions for the promotion and protection of human rights;

(e) Continue to assist with the drafting and implementation of legislation to promote and protect human rights;

(f) Continue to assist with the training of persons responsible for the administration of justice.

2. The Cambodia Office was also requested to provide support to the work of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for human rights in Cambodia, appointed to: (a) maintain contact with the Government and people of Cambodia; (b) guide and coordinate the United Nations human rights presence in Cambodia; and (c) assist the Government in the promotion and protection of human rights.

3. The Commission on Human Rights, in its resolution 1999/76, welcoming the continuing role of the United Nations High Commissioner for human rights in the promotion and protection of human rights in Cambodia. The Commission requested the Secretary-General, through his Special Representative for Human Rights in Cambodia, in collaboration with the Cambodia Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, to assist the Government of Cambodia in ensuring the protection of the human rights of all people in Cambodia and to ensure adequate resources for the continued functioning of the operational presence of the Cambodia Office.

4. In the same resolution, the Commission requested the Secretary-General to report to the Commission at its fifty-sixth session on the role of the Office of the High Commissioner in assisting the Government and people of Cambodia in the promotion and protection of human rights. The present report is submitted in accordance with that.

5. The Commission requested the Government of Cambodia and the High Commissioner to enter into discussion with a view to renewing the Memorandum of Understanding on the

programme, including technical cooperation, of the Cambodian Office. The current Memorandum of Understanding will expire in March 2000. A mission consisting of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for human rights in Cambodia, the Deputy High Commissioner for Human Rights and the Chief of the Activities and Programmes Branch of the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) visited Cambodia in August 1999 to discuss the renewal of the Memorandum of Understanding with the Government. Following agreement on the extension of the Memorandum for a further period of two years until March 2002, a draft text was submitted to the Government in early September 1999, the details of which were under discussion between the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Cambodia Office at the time of writing of the present report.

I. SUPPORT FOR THE WORK OF THE SPECIAL REPRESENTATIVE AND EXPERTS

6. During 1999, the Office activities comprised the following components.

(a) Support the work of the Special Representative

7. The Special Representative carried out four missions to Cambodia during which he was assisted by the Cambodia Office. He visited at least one province on each occasion. During these missions he was granted two audiences with His Majesty King Sihanouk. He also met with senior government officials, including the Prime Minister and the President of the Senate, as well as representatives of the armed forces, the police, the provincial authorities and NGOs. The Special Representative addressed the National Assembly in October 1999. The Special Representative also participated in the discussions concerning the extension of the Memorandum of Understanding between the High Commissioner and the Government (see para. 5). The Office was also responsible for the preparation of background materials for the annual reports of the Special Representative to the Commission on Human Rights and the General Assembly. These reports were translated into Khmer and widely disseminated.

(b) Support for experts' missions

8. The Office provided support to the mission of two experts visiting the country to identify priorities for reform of the police. The Office also provided support to a mission of senior officials from the Office of Legal Affairs and the Department of Political Affairs of the United Nations and an independent expert who visited the country in August to discuss with the Cambodian authorities the modalities for the establishment of a tribunal with a view to bringing to justice the perpetrators of serious human rights violations committed during the Khmer Rouge period.

(c) Participation in the activities of the United Nations system in Cambodia

9. The Office developed close cooperation with United Nations agencies and programmes to promote the integration of human rights in their activities. Inter alia it participated in the preparation of the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) which is to be

completed in 2000. The Office also provided support to the informal Contact Group comprising bilateral and multilateral donors interested in supporting reforms in the areas of the administration of justice, the legal system and the police.

II. ASSISTANCE IN LEGISLATIVE REFORM

10. In 1999, the Office, through its Legal Assistance Unit, contributed to developing a national legal system consistent with international human rights norms, the rule of law and principles of democracy. In particular the Unit provided assistance in the following areas.

Assistance to the Senate

11. The Legal Assistance Unit provided advice on proposals for the internal regulations relevant to human rights of the newly-created Senate, which were adopted by the Senate at its first session. It also provided advice to the Senate Commission of Human Rights and Reception of Complaints regarding its mandate.

The law on communal elections/commune governance

12. The planned communal elections, to be held in all of the country's approximately 1,600 communes, are tentatively scheduled for late 2000 and drafts of the communal election and communal governance laws are expected to be adopted early in 2000. Assistance was provided to the Ministry of the Interior's committee responsible for drafting the laws, through written comments on revised drafts, assistance with translation and participation in meetings and seminars. The Unit assisted in the creation of two NGO working groups which provide input into the preparation of the draft laws, and it also participates in the monthly meetings organized by the non-governmental Cambodian Centre for Conflict Resolution. The Centre for Conflict Resolution acts as a forum for ongoing discussions between government officials, members of the judiciary, political party representatives, journalists and NGO representatives on issues of concern relating to the upcoming communal elections. A number of recommendations regarding the nature, powers and function of commune councils and the electoral process have been forwarded to the Government from these meetings.

Penal Code and Code of Criminal Procedure

13. The Office is assisting the Ministry of Justice in producing the English version of the draft codes. The Office will also provide the Ministry with judicial mentors' comments on the drafts and facilitate consultations regarding them with judges, prosecutors and the judicial police in the provinces.

Pre-trial detention

14. In August 1999, the Parliament adopted the law on pre-trial detention. Even though genocide and crimes against humanity are not recognized under existing Cambodian law, the new law provides for a three-year detention period for persons suspected of commiting war crimes and crimes against humanity. Before its adoption, the Office expressed its concerns in

letters to the President of the National Assembly and the President of the Senate, stating that a pre-trial detention of three years violates article 14.3 (c) of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, and is detrimental to those who would subsequently be acquitted.

The law on prison administration

15. The Office had discussions on reform of the law in October 1999 with the Director of the Prisons Department of the Ministry of the Interior. It was agreed that the Office would explore the possibility of providing an international expert on prison legislation. The advice of the Office was sought on the recently adopted Proclamation on the Administration of Prisons and Prison Procedures, developed by the Ministry of the Interior in cooperation with the Cambodian Criminal Justice Assistance Project, which contains important safeguards and promotes the application of international standards of detention in Cambodia's prisons, including the Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners. The law allowing conditional release of prisoners under certain conditions is apparently very infrequently applied and consideration should be given to its application to the greatest extent possible to limit the social and personal damage caused by imprisonment. The Office continues to advocate for this.

The law on associations and non-governmental organizations

16. The Legal Assistance Unit has, since early 1995, been providing assistance to the Department of Political Affairs of the Ministry of Interior on this issue. In January 1999, it provided detailed comments on a draft law. In October, the Ministry presented a new draft containing several provisions previously suggested by the Unit. The Unit is currently preparing its comments on this draft.

Article 51 of the Law on Civil Servants (1994)

17. The Office provided advice on a draft amendment of this article, which was subsequently adopted by the Parliament. This article had previously been mentioned in resolutions of the General Assembly and Commission on Human Rights as it required prosecutors to ask for prior authorization from the competent government unit before bringing charges against a civil servant. The amended article 51 does not contain such a requirement. It states that, in the case where a civil servant is prosecuted for committing a criminal offence, the head of the institution concerned shall be informed within 72 hours at the latest.

Anti-corruption law

18. The Legal Assistance Unit has provided information to the National Assembly on the anti-corruption laws of other countries. It is expected that a law will be adopted in 2001.

Land law

19. In collaboration with the Council of Jurists, a working group of NGOs and intergovernmental organizations have been working to strengthen the draft land law. The Office provided support in establishing close cooperation between the Government and the working group with a view to the drafting of an equitable land law.

Statute on judges and organization of courts

20. The Office and the Judicial Mentors are providing comments on the draft law. In October 1999, the Office sponsored a workshop for judges, prosecutors and NGOs organized by the Ministry of Justice. Recommendations of the workshop were presented to the Supreme Council of Magistracy at its first meeting in November. The Office will continue to encourage regular meetings of the Council.

Law on intercountry adoption

21. A draft law on intercountry adoption was prepared by UNICEF. The Office contributed to the draft through discussion and comments. The draft was submitted to the Ministry of Social Affairs for final revision in September 1999.

22. In 2000 the Office will initiate a project on law-making. In this regard, a proposal was prepared in cooperation with the Council of Jurists. Technical assistance and advice will be provided to the Government and legislative bodies concerned.

III. ADMINISTRATION OF JUSTICE

The judicial mentor programme

23. The main objectives of the judicial mentor programme, ongoing since 1995, are to:

Provide daily advice and assistance to the courts;

Assist the Cambodian courts in interaction with the police, prison officials, military and provincial administration;

Identify needs of the judicial system, including reform of law in conformity with international human rights standards.

24. The judicial mentors, international lawyers recruited as consultants, work in provincial and municipal courts with Cambodian judges, prosecutors and clerks. Training is offered to judges and prosecutors on the Cambodian Constitution, Cambodian law and international human rights norms. They also provide training to local police, prison personnel, military personnel and government officials. The programme currently covers five provinces (Battambang, Kompong Cham, Kompong Chhnang, Takeo and Svay Rieng) and the Phnom Penh Municipal Court. Logistical assistance has been provided for the renovation of court and prison buildings. During his last mission, the Special Representative and the Ministry of Justice agreed to the secondment of judicial mentors to the Supreme and Appeal Courts in Phnom Penh in 2000.

Prison issues

25. The Office continued to monitor the legal and physical conditions of detention in almost all Cambodia's 24 prisons during the year, in order to ensure that these conditions are consistent with international and national human rights standards. Information is also gathered from human

rights and other NGOs which monitor prison conditions. A briefing paper on prison issues was sent in June 1999 to the Ministry of the Interior, the Ministry of Justice, the General Prosecutor and to the Cambodian Human Rights Committee. Issues of concern brought to their attention include food shortages and the resultant health problems; prisoners with HIV/AIDS; lack of proper sanitation; lack of materials such as mosquito nets, blankets etc.; overcrowding; lack of exercise; the special needs of women prisoners and minors; torture and other ill-treatment; visits from families and friends; lack of education and vocational training programmes; and the legal aspects of detention, including excessive pre-trial detention and the right to appeal.

26. In February 1999, amnesties were granted by His Majesty the King to seven prisoners in the final stages of HIV/AIDS. The Office followed these cases until the last two prisoners were released in August.

Police reform

27. In May 1999, the Office provided support for the visit of two experts on police reform. The experts' main recommendations for reform included:

The adoption of four major laws (Penal Code, Criminal Procedure Code, Evidence Act and Police Act);

Training of the police, including in investigative skills and forensic capability;

Stringent scrutiny of police performance and methods;

The establishment of an autonomous Directorate of Prosecution.

A report containing the experts' findings, as well as their recommendations for the reform of the police, was prepared and circulated.

28. The Office is working closely with a legal expert at the Ministry of Justice seconded by the Government of Canada to prepare an overall framework for judicial reform.

IV. NATIONAL INSTITUTIONS FOR THE PROMOTION AND PROTECTION OF HUMAN RIGHTS

29. The Office provided support to the Senate Commission on Human Rights to organize a one-day seminar in November 1999 on the role and responsibilities of human rights institutions in Cambodia. The seminar was attended by members of the Parliament, government officials and NGOs. Short and long-term plans to implement human rights standards were proposed. The need for an independent national commission on human rights was also reiterated. The Office is in the process of preparing follow-up programmes to implement the outcome of the seminar.

30. In mid-1999, the Office participated in discussions with a Canadian expert investigating the feasibility of establishing an independent national human rights institution. No action has yet been taken. The Office will assist in promoting dialogue on this issue during 2000.

V. TREATY REPORTING AND INTERNATIONAL OBLIGATIONS

31. The Office continued its technical cooperation programme with the Inter-Ministerial Committee on Reporting Obligations and its permanent secretariat. The Office is assisting the Inter-Ministerial Committee in reviewing the final draft of the report of Cambodia on the implementation of the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment. The Inter-Ministerial Committee responsible for reviewing the final draft of the report on the implementation of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women has not yet been convened. The sub-Inter-Ministerial Committee responsible for reviewing the implementation of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights was convened during the first half of 1999 and has not been able to finalize the draft report, which is due to be submitted to the Inter-Ministerial Committee.

32. In July 1999, the Government presented its initial report on the implementation of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights to the Committee on Human Rights. The concluding remarks of the Committee were disseminated by the Office. The Government will present its initial report (submitted in 1997) on the Convention on the Rights of the Child to the Committee on the Rights of the Child at its May-June 2000 session. The Office is currently assisting the Government and the Committee in preparation for this session.

33. The Office is planning to organize, with the Centre for Democratic Institutions, a training session for government officials, parliamentarians and NGOs on reporting under human rights international instruments, in Phnom Penh in July 2000.

VI. ASSISTANCE TO HUMAN RIGHTS NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS

34. The Office continued its substantial programme of support and assistance to non-governmental organizations active in the field of human rights. This programme consists of:

Financial grants from the Trust Fund for Human Rights Education in Cambodia;

Training on substantive human rights issues;

The provision of consultants for management training.

35. In 1999, as in 1998, $250,000 was allocated for support to NGOs working in the fields of human rights education and the promotion and protection of the rights of women, children and ethnic minorities. In August, the Trust Fund Management Committee selected 12 project proposals for funding. These projects will receive a total of $150,000. The remaining $100,000 will be used to develop and implement, together with human rights NGOs, projects in three thematic areas, namely women's rights, poverty and human rights, and access to justice.

36. The Office regularly attended the meetings of the Human Rights Action Committee, which involves 16 NGOs. The Office and the Human Rights Action Committee exchange information on individual cases and conduct joint investigations when necessary. The Office also shares information with the Action Committee on legal issues and new draft laws.

VII. EDUCATION AND TRAINING PROGRAMMES AND CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT

Royal Cambodian Armed Forces

37. In 1999, the Office completed the revision of the human rights and democracy training curriculum for the Royal Cambodian Armed Forces (RCAF). The revised curriculum contains extensive sections on women's and children's rights, with reference to relevant domestic laws and international standards. Moreover, training sessions focusing on human rights and democracy were conducted in two additional provinces and 20 more officers were trained as human rights instructors. These instructors were assisted by the Office in conducting their training programmes for soldiers and officers. There are currently 50 RCAF human rights instructors in Cambodia.

38. Some 200 training courses with 8,000 participants were conducted in 1999. Since the beginning of the programme in 1995, approximately 20,500 officers and soldiers have completed the courses. The Office conducted numerous four-day workshops on human rights and democracy in Phnom Penh for, inter alia, 48 deputy regional and provincial RCAF commanders from 24 provinces and municipalities, and 51 regional, provincial and divisional commanders. As in previous years, following the workshops, the International Committee of the Red Cross conducted one-day seminars on international humanitarian law. Workshops were also held in Steung Treng and Banteay Meanchey. Training courses were conducted in various provinces and municipalities.

39. In order to incorporate human rights and democracy in the regular training programmes of military schools, the Office offered training on these subjects and training methodologies to 45 military school instructors from 17 schools. The Office will regularly provide them with training materials.

The Royal Gendarmerie

40. For the first time, the Office held a five-day workshop on human rights and law for 41 provincial and municipal commanders and deputy commanders of the Royal Gendarmerie, as well as for senior officers of the Phnom Penh Municipal Royal Gendarmerie. The training was conducted in cooperation with the Training Department of the Royal Gendarmerie. The Office assisted in the training workshops held by human rights instructors of the Royal Gendarmerie, who were previously trained by the Office.

41. The Office completed the revision of the Gendarmerie training curriculum. The revised curriculum includes extensive sections on women's and children's rights, relevant domestic laws and international standards.

The police

42. The Office prepared a Police Pocket Guide for the judicial police. The Guide contains a synthesis of Cambodian law and international human rights standards on the role of the police; rules on arrest, interrogation, investigation and detention; rights of the accused; and an overview

of the criminal justice system. The Office also developed case studies on the content and purpose of the Guide, to be used for the one-day training workshops which are conducted by the judicial mentors and the provincial Office staff. Case studies and the Police Pocket Guide were incorporated in the training curriculum for the police on human rights and law.

43. An eight-day training of trainers workshop on human rights and the law was held for a selected group of police officials from the provinces and municipalities. This group will conduct human rights and law training programmes in the provinces and municipalities early in 2000.

Other training activities

44. In the framework of the Cambodian Criminal Justice Assistance Project, the Office held training sessions on the Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners for approximately 150 prison officials from various provincial prisons. The Office also held a five-day workshop on human rights and labour rights for 11 labour inspectors from the Ministry of Social Affairs, Labour, Vocational Training and Youth Rehabilitation.

45. Training workshops were held for local NGOs. The Office provided training material to NGOs conducting training programmes on minority rights, labour rights and HIV/AIDS anti-discrimination. Some 764 persons participated in the 17 workshops held by the offices in various provinces.

46. At the request of UNHCR, in areas where there is a concentration of recent returnees, the Office conducted training programmes on human rights and democracy for local officials and returnees.

VIII. INFORMATION AND DOCUMENTATION

47. The Office distributed approximately 100,000 copies of human rights documents, including reports of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on human rights, copies of the international instruments, the Cambodian law compilation, the Police Pocket Guide and human rights curricula in Khmer, English and French. These materials were distributed to ministries and government departments at the national, provincial and communal levels, judges, prosecutors, police, military personnel, United Nations agencies, international and non-governmental organizations, students and the general population.

IX. MONITORING AND PROTECTION ACTIVITIES

48. In 1999, there was a marked decline in politically-related violence. The Office monitoring focused on non-politically motivated human rights violations. However, in the latter part of the year, there were reports of several incidents of intimidation, attacks made in public statements against the leader of the opposition and harassment of members of the opposition. In September, two opposition party officials were arrested and charged with attempted murder in connection with the September 1998 rocket attack on a government convoy in Siem Reap. They are currently detained in the Military Prison in Phnom Penh. During his last mission, the Special Representative raised the issue of the military court's jurisdiction over civilians and specifically mentioned this case.

49. Allegations of torture in police and gendarmerie custody as a means of intimidation and obtaining confessions remain a serious concern. In response to the Special Representative's communication of June 1997, concerning 32 cases of torture in a police station in Battambang, the Director-General of the National Police wrote in late September, admitting the possible existence of ill-treatment in custody. He attributed it to the "technical incompetence" of some officers. In May 1999, following a meeting between the Special Representative and the Director-General of the National Police, instructions were sent to police throughout the country to stop any practice which might violate the law or the rights of citizens, and informing them that such violations would be sanctioned. The Office is currently preparing a report on other cases of torture in police stations.

50. The Office monitored the trial of two staff members of the Cambodian League for the Defence and Promotion of Human Rights (LICADHO), a prominent Cambodian human rights NGO. They were arrested and placed in pre-trial detention after the December 1998 demonstrations at the dumping of toxic waste in Sihanoukville. Owing to lack of evidence the charges were dropped.

51. A report on the investigations carried out by the Office into the deaths of two prisoners who escaped from the Sihanoukville prison in June 1999 and were rearrested was submitted to the Government in September. The report concluded that there was strong prima facie evidence that the two were extrajudicially executed by prison guards after their recapture, and that the killings took place with the full knowledge of senior provincial officials present at the prison. The report also noted that staff members of the Office were denied access by the Prison Director to confidential interviews with prisoners. The concerns of the Office were communicated to the Ministry of the Interior in July and, in a written reply, the Ministry afforded full cooperation to the Office in the investigation and authorized an exhumation and forensic examination of the corpses. Later in the month, a detailed report on the examination was forwarded to the Ministry of the Interior.

52. On 14 September 1999 the Office wrote to the Ministry of National Defence regarding a land dispute and violent eviction in Siem Reap town. The letter requested the military to cease using violence against civilians and the Ministry to find a humanitarian solution for the 150 evicted families. On 27 September, the Office wrote to the Minister of Justice regarding the same case, citing constitutional grounds for the resolution of the dispute through the proper judicial process.

53. The Office also addressed a separate letter to the Ministry of National Defence on 14 September 1999 raising concerns about the involvement of military forces and the military court in the arrest and detention of civilians, referring specifically to the arrest of members of the opposition. Two letters were sent to the Military Court requesting access to the detainees. In a letter addressed to the Co-Ministers of National Defence, Cambodian laws were cited, according to which the arrest and detention of the two opposition party members were clearly illegal.

54. The Office conducted an investigation into the massacre of 14 members of an ethnic minority in Ratanakiri province, which occurred in July. According to the provincial authorities' report, 9 of the 11 suspects were arrested. However, all nine were beaten to death by angry villagers.

55. The Office wrote to the 2nd Military Region, the Commander of the General Staff and the Co-Ministers of Defence regarding the disappearance of Chou Ouk while in military custody in Prey Veng province. All the letters included a request for access to the military compound where Chou Ouk was last seen in order to verify information received that he was killed and his body disposed of in the compound.

56. The Office initiated a needs-assessment project to develop a coordinated and systematic strategy for the Office in combating trafficking and forced prostitution of women and children. Following a preliminary assessment of existing programmes and activities, the research focused on evaluating relevant government activities. Of special concern is poor law enforcement in cases of trafficking. Visits to provinces close to the Vietnamese and Thai borders helped to clarify the connections between traffickers and law enforcement officials and establish a pattern of violations of the rule of law. The Office wrote to the Minster of Justice regarding the failure of a municipal court prosecutor to order the arrest of a Phnom Penh hotel owner. During a search of the hotel, the owner was caught holding a number of "purchased" minors in circumstances of forced prostitution and forced confinement.

57. The Office carried out a series of field visits to the north-east of Cambodia, where most people belonging to hill-tribe minorities live. The Office provided support to a seminar on indigenous people which was attended by representatives of hill-tribe minorities, provincial authorities and the national Government. The Office held discussions with NGOs concerning the effects of the planned commune governance reform, the implementation of a new land law and illegal and legal logging on hill tribes and minorities. A visit in June 1999 focused on indigenous people's rights in connection with a legal logging concession granted to a foreign company.

58. Other communications sent to the Government included the Special Representative's letter expressing serious concern about the abduction of a member of the National Assembly from Battambang province. He was released upon payment of a substantial ransom. The Special Representative also sought clarification from the Government on the events surrounding the arrest of a Vietnamese national in Pailin, who subsequently disappeared.

X. PROVINCIAL OFFICE NETWORK

59. Provincial offices were established with the objective of strengthening human rights activities at the provincial level and ensuring uniform implementation of the programme of the Cambodia Office throughout the country.

60. The main activities of the provincial offices are:

(a) Maintaining regular contact with the local authorities, the military, the police, prison officials and NGOs;

(b) Facilitating training programmes for the military, the police and the local authorities;

(c) Holding regular consultations with local human rights NGOs and organizing some capacity-building for these NGOs;

(d) Monitoring the human rights and humanitarian situation in the prisons;

(e) Monitoring the general human rights situation and conducting investigations into individual cases, in partnership with human rights NGOs.

61. The first three provincial offices, in Battambang, Kompong Cham and Siem Reap, were opened in early 1995. In early 1997, three other offices were opened, in Kampot, Kompong Chhnang and Prey Veng. In June 1999, the Kompong Chhnang office was closed and a new provincial office opened in Banteay Meanchey. In Pailin and Phnom Malai, formerly under the control of the Khmer Rouge, sub-offices were opened in mid-1998 with the support of UNDP. The mandate of the Pailin and Phnom Malai sub-offices is to conduct human rights education and training. They are under the supervision of the Battambang and Banteay Meanchey offices, respectively.

62. Since late 1997, each provincial office has a Cambodian human rights officer and an assistant, with an adviser who is a United Nations Volunteer (UNV). In 1999, four new UNVs joined the offices in Banteay Meanchey, Kampot, Kompong Cham and Prey Veng. Two more are currently being recruited for the offices in Siem Reap and Battambang.

63. Staff of the provincial offices participated in a workshop organized in September 1999 by the Education, Training and Information Unit. The agenda of the workshop included human rights concepts relevant to their work, including non-discrimination, the development of a gender perspective, and clarification of some basic concepts on economic, social and cultural rights. In addition the workshop focused on ways of strengthening the work of the provincial office network. In a follow-up meeting in October, a list of recommendations in the areas of monitoring and investigation, prison visits, management and administration, strengthening the capacity of NGOs and training was prepared.

64. Throughout 1999, training of the staff of provincial offices has continued. These training sessions coincide with the monthly meetings of the provincial office network.

XI. PARTICIPATION IN UNITED NATIONS SYSTEM ACTIVITIES

65. In 1999, the Office participated in a series of meetings leading to the production of a draft of a United Nations development assistance framework for Cambodia. In particular, the Office took responsibility for the sections relating to human rights and the rule of law, and made comments on other sections concerning poverty reduction, human development and sustainable management of natural resources. The Office participated in a UNDP programme preparing a video film on labour exploitation and trafficking of children, which will be shown on the State television, TVK, as part of a series featuring the activities of the United Nations system.

66. The Office took part in the United Nations Theme Group on the Culture of Peace, planning activities for the International Year for the Culture of Peace in 2000. The Office also participated in the preparation of the National Conference on Culture of Peace which is to be held in December by the Cambodian Government, in cooperation with UNESCO. The Office will focus on the workshop on Human Rights and Peace.

67. The Office regularly attended meetings of the Theme Group on HIV/AIDS. It is also cooperating with UNAIDS to integrate HIV/AIDS issues into its ongoing human rights training programmes and to design new training programmes in this area for NGO trainers.